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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/612,108	07/02/2003	Eleftherios Rodousakis	5015.1004	3372

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EXAMINER

HEWITT, JAMES M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3679

DATE MAILED: 06/03/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/612,108	Applicant(s) RODOUSAKIS ET AL.	
	Examiner James M Hewitt	Art Unit 3679	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 May 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 2 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 16 May 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>5/16/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after allowance or after an Office action under *Ex Parte Quayle*, 25 USPQ 74, 453 O.G. 213 (Comm'r Pat. 1935). Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, prosecution in this application has been reopened pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 5/16/05 has been entered.

Allowable Subject Matter

The indicated allowability of claims 1-10 is withdrawn in view of the newly discovered reference(s) to Neuschotz (US 3,035,797). Rejections based on the newly cited reference(s) follow.

Drawings

The drawings were received on 5/16/05. These drawings are acceptable.

Claim Objections

Claims 1-10 are objected to because of the following informalities:

In claim 1 line 4, "flexible" should be inserted between "first" and "tank".

In claim 1 line 5, "flexible" should be inserted between "second" and "tank".

In claim 1 line 11, the second instance of "the" should be replaced with "said".

In claim 4 line 3, "to" should be deleted.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1, 3 and 5-10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Neuschotz (US 3,035,797).

With respect to claim 1, Neuschotz discloses a connection arrangement for detachably connecting a first flexible tank (11) and a second flexible tank (11) of an aircraft, comprising: a latching device (22); a first tubular connecting element (21) attached to the first tank; and a second tubular connecting element (20 and 21 associated with the second tank) attached to the second tank, the first and the second connecting elements being detachably connected to each other using the latching device, wherein, in a connected state of the connecting elements, the first and the second tanks are in fluid communication with each other via the first and the second connecting elements and the latching device is disposed inside one of the first and

second flexible tanks so as to be actuatable from outside the respective flexible tank through the respective flexible tank (see col. 2 line 69 – col. 3 line 3).

With respect to claim 3, wherein the latching device includes a first spring element (40).

With respect to claim 5, wherein the first flexible tank includes a rubber fitting (34) and the first tubular connecting element includes an attachment flange (33) for attaching to the rubber fitting.

With respect to claim 6, the first flexible tank is directly attached to the first tubular connecting element.

With respect to claim 7, further comprising a rib element (15) separating the first flexible tank and the second flexible tank.

With respect to claim 8, the second flexible tank is directly attached to the second tubular connecting element.

With respect to claim 9, wherein the second tubular connecting element projects into an inside of the second tank.

With respect to claim 10, further comprising a sealing element (31) disposed between the first and the second tubular connecting elements.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the

invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claim 4 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Neuschotz (US 3,035,797).

Neuschotz teaches all the limitations of claim 4 except that the first and second spring elements are positioned across from each other at an angle of 180 degrees. From Neuschotz statement at lines 30-2 of column 3, "There may typically be three of the latch or dog elements **22**, mounted to ring 21 at three evenly circularly spaced locations." and at lines 52-54 of column 3, "Where three of the latch or dog elements **22** are employed", it should be understood that at least two or four, and conceivably other given pluralities of latches may be employed, so long as they are evenly circularly spaced. In the instance that there are two or four latch elements, there would be two or four spring elements, two of which would be positioned across from each other at an angle of 180 degrees. Given Neuschotz's statements that imply that only three latch elements are suitable, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to at least employ two or four latch elements and thus spring elements.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 2 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.


Note that the allowability of claim 2 is also contingent upon overcoming the above noted objections to claim 1. See ***Claim Objections*** above.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to James M Hewitt whose telephone number is 571-272-7084.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Daniel Stodola can be reached on 571-272-7087. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


JAMES M. HEWITT
PRIMARY EXAMINER